

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 223

Condemning the violence in Chechnya.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 8, 1999

Mr. HELMS (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. WELLSTONE, and Mr. LUGAR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Condemning the violence in Chechnya.

Whereas, since September 1999, the Russian Federation has conducted a military operation against Chechnya that has resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians and the displacement of more than 200,000 people;

Whereas the Russian armed forces is launching repeated bombing attacks on the capital city of Grozny;

Whereas the recent conflict in Chechnya represents a continuation of the use of military force by Russia in 1994–1996, which caused the deaths of approximately 100,000 citizens of Russia;

Whereas neither the use of force in 1994–1996, nor the current use of force in Chechnya enhances the prospects for a peaceful resolution of the status of Chechnya;

Whereas the United States condemns terrorism in all forms, including the bombing attacks of apartment buildings in Moscow and Volgodonsk in the summer of 1999;

Whereas the appropriate manner to combat terrorist attacks is not through the use of indiscriminate force against civilians;

Whereas on November 4, 1999, Elena Bonner, Chairman of the Andrei Sakharov Foundation, testified before the Committee of Foreign Relations of the Senate that “carpet bombing and shelling of cities, villages, and refugee convoys attempting to escape the war zone constitute a grave violation of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and the Additional Protocols and demonstrate the Russian government’s complete disregard for these extremely important international agreements”;

Whereas the United States believes that the recent targeting of ethnic minorities by local Russian officials, including blanket detentions and expulsions, calls into question the commitment of the Government of Russia to pluralism in the process of democratic reform in that country;

Whereas the Government of Russia has limited media access to and coverage of the conflict in Chechnya to preserve Russian popular support for the military operation;

Whereas the Government of Russia has openly violated its commitments under the Flank Document to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe with its deployments of military equipment in and around Chechnya; and

Whereas the conduct of the Russian armed forces in Chechnya threatens to destabilize the southern part of

the Russian Federation as well as the region of the
Caucasus as a whole: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) condemns the use of indiscriminate force by
3 the Russian armed forces against civilians in
4 Chechnya;

5 (2) urges the Russian Federation—

6 (A) to assist those persons who have been
7 displaced from Chechnya as a result of the con-
8 flict; and

9 (B) to allow representatives of the inter-
10 national community access to the internally dis-
11 placed persons for humanitarian relief; and

12 (3) calls upon Russian President Boris Yeltsin
13 and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin to devote every
14 effort, including the use of third-party mediation, to
15 the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Chechnya.

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